UMASS/AMHERST
312066 0277 9765 2

MASS. HS10.2: F43/992

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
COLLECTION

FEB 23 1998

University of Massachusetts
Depository Copy

FFY'~~91~~ 92

IV-B PLAN

Chapter II

Overview of Consumer Population

Served by the Department of Social Services

II. Overview of Consumer Population Served by the Department of Social Services

I. Introduction

The Department of Social Services is the state agency that is designated to provide social services to children and families in Massachusetts. These services are provided either directly by Department staff in twenty-six Area and four Field Support Offices, or through private providers from whom the Department purchases services. Consumers may receive both direct and purchased services while living either at home or in a substitute care placement. Children receiving DSS services may be under parental or guardian supervision, or may be in the care and custody of the Department.

This section provides an overview of the population served by DSS in FY'91 and compares it to a similar overview of the FY'90 consumer population as described in last year's plan. We are therefore able to look at the characteristics of the present consumer population as well as discern trends and changes which have occured over the past year.

All of the data which follow were compiled from the Department's automated system, ASSIST (Area-based Social Services Information System Technology).

II. Overview of Consumer Population Served by the Department of Social Services

ASSIST is a management information system that is composed of five modules:

- Consumer Registration and Tracking
- Resource Management
- Authorization, Payment, and Accounting (links consumer registration/tracking and resource management)
- Foster Care Review
- Subsidy Registration

The database contains information dealing with consumers/caseloads, provider programs/resources, authorizations/payments, foster care reviews, and subsidies. The aggregate and consumer-specific data which are available from this database via reports and direct (on-line) access enable us to efficiently manage our resources to meet the needs of our clients.

2. Consumers and Families Served by DSS staff

Volume: The total DSS caseload at the end of June 1991 was 25,994 families (see Table 1). There were 47,922 children under 18 years old in the caseload at that time. Compared to June 1990, the total caseload increased by 4% (1,048 families) while the number of children rose by 3% (1,519) (Table 1). The growth in the caseload was less than the increase that took place from FY'89 to FY'90 (+11% for families, +15% for children, and +14% for total consumers, based on updated statistics).

II. Overview of Consumer Population Served by the Department of Social Services

2. Consumers and Families Served by DSS staff (continued)

The number of children with supported (substantiated) sexual abuse investigations increased by 3% between calender years 1989 and 1990 (Table 7B).

For all forms of maltreatment, the total number of children with supported findings rose 26% from 1989 to 1990 (Table 7B). In contrast, the 1988 to 1989 expansion was 21%. The first half of 1991 showed an 8% increase over 1990 in the number of children with supported findings of maltreatment. This was a much lower rate of growth than the 1989-90 rate of 26% for the first six months.

Location: Children may receive services from the Department of Social Services either while living at home or while in substitute care placements. The breakdown by location of children in the DSS caseload is proportionately similar to that of a year ago. Table 2 shows that, on June, 1991, children under 18 years old who received services while remaining at home represented 74% of those in the DSS caseload, continuing the trend of previous years. Of the 26% of the child caseload who were in substitute care rather than at home, 81% were in foster homes, 13% in community residences, and 6% in other locations. The percentages show that, like last year, most children in DSS care and custody live in a foster-family setting.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2013

http://archive.org/details/ffyivbplanchapte1992mass

II. Overview of Consumer Population Served by the Department of Social Services

Age of Individuals in Placement:

Table 3 and Figure 1 illustrate the age distribution of individuals in placement. The largest group is comprised of children between the ages of twelve and eighteen (36%). However, this adolescent group, as a proportion of all children in placement, has been declining as the 0-5 year old group grows. Four years ago, the 12 to 18 year-old group represented 48% of the children in placement.

The age distribution of children in placement varies according to the type of placement (Table 4). This year's data show an increase over last year of all children in placement. The proportion of children who are under 12 years old accounted for 67% of the foster care population. In contrast, community residences have a greater proportion of older (over 12 years) children (85%) than does foster care (33%). For each age group, a greater number of children are placed in foster homes than in community residences (Table 4).

Of the individuals in foster home and community residence placements on June 1991, 60% were under twelve years old and 35% were twelve to eighteen years old (Table 4). The remaining 5% of consumers in placement were over eighteen, but continue to need placement services.

II. Overview of Consumer Population Served by the Department of Social Services

Length of Time in Placement: The total number of individuals in foster care homes and community residences increased by 12% over the past year (Table 4). The proportion of children in these substitute care placements for more than two years as of June 1991 (33%) increased slightly since last year (31%) (Table 5).

Changes in Subsidized Adoptions:

If a child must be removed from the home and it is subsequently determined that he or she cannot be returned home, a permanent home is sought for the child. Adoption subsidies are paid by the Department to adoptive parents of children with special needs who might otherwise not find adoptive placement. These special needs include age, physical or emotional disability, and sibling-group size. Subsidies are also available for promoting minority adoptions. There was a 10% increase in adoption subsidies from 3,358 at the end of FY'90 to 3,705 in FY'91 (Table 6). The agency's growing number of subsidized adoptions is indicative of the continuing success in securing adoption placements for children with special needs who might otherwise have remained in substitute care on a long-term basis.

During FY'90, 554 adoptions were finalized for children in DSS care and custody, a decrease of 6% from FY'89. Eighty-two percent of these adoptions were facilitated through the provision of an adoption subsidy by DSS. (FY'91 adoption statistics will available in January, 1992.)

II. Overview of Consumer Population Served by the Department of Social Services

Profile of Children Abused and Neglected: Department projections show an increase of 8% in 1991 of children who are reported maltreated, and an increase of 8% in children whose investigations result in supported finding (Table 7A).

For the first half of 1991, 44,366 children were reported and 15,148 had supported findings as compared to 41,035 and 14,017 in 1990.

Data from Table 7B show that in 1990, the number of children with a supported finding of sexual abuse represented 10% of all children with supported investigations of maltreatment statewide. Among DSS Service Areas, this percentage varied from 4% to 18%. From 1989 to 1990, the number of children with supported findings of sexual abuse rose by 3% (Table 7A).

3. Conclusions

The overview of the DSS consumer population at the end of FY'91, and the comparison to similar data from the previous fiscal year, reveal certain areas in which progress has been made or where certain trends are indicated. Each of these suggests future directions of DSS planning efforts.

II. Overview of Consumer Population Served by the Department of Social Services

Some of the key findings are:

- The majority of children in the DSS caseload continues to be those who receive services while living at home. This observation underscores the Department's efforts to strengthen its supportive, preventive, and reunification services to children and families at home.

- Children who are over 12 years old no longer represent more than half of the children in placement. The proportion has decreased over time from slightly over 50% in 1984 to 43% in 1991. The Department has been successfully implementing new ways of giving these children stability through legal guardianship programs or by helping them to make a transition to independent living. Supportive/preventive programs have been targeted to this group. In FY'90, 237 guardianships were granted.

- The total DSS caseload increased by 4% from 1990 to 1991. This was also reflected by a 3% growth in the number of children. Although the caseload continues to grow it is increasing at lower rate than last year (Table 8).

- The number of children under 18 years old in foster care and community residential placements increased by 13% over last year.

- The total number of children in placement increased by 12% from 1990 to 1991. Community residence placements showed a 9% increase while foster care placements increased by 12%. The Department has closely monitored trends in these placements over the year, in order to assure that those children in need of placement are properly placed, with appropriate service planning and review.

- In each successive year since 1987, the numbers of children reported and with supported investigations of maltreatment have increased. During 1990, investigations which resulted in a supported finding of sexual abuse represented 10% of all supported investigations statewide. The Department will continue to provide new and ongoing outreach, prevention, and treatment services for abuse and neglect in general and sexual abuse in particular.

II. Overview of Consumer Population Served by the Department of Social Services

- The number of children with supported investigations of sexual abuse increased by 3% from 1989 to 1990. The Department continues to provide several abuse treatment programs and to monitor and evaluate the utilization and effectiveness of these contracts in order to assure maximum availability of services to sexually abused children and their familes.

The findings contained in the overview of the consumer populations, together with an assessment of FY 1991 goals, IV-B Assurances, and the DSS Needs Assessment process, have helped guide the Department in setting goals and priorities for long-range strategy, programs, and policies.

TABLE 1. Total Caseload, Department of Social Services, June, 1990 and June, 1991.

CASELOAD	FY 1990 12/89	FY 1990 6/90	FY 1991 12/90	FY 1991 6/91	Change 6/90 - 6/91
Families	23,181	24,946	25,856	25,994	1,048 (+4%)
Children (Under 18)	42,284	46,403	48,099	47,922	1,519 (+3%)
Total Consumer:	72,806	80,090	83,088	81,975	1,885 (+2%)

Source: ASSIST Reports NTDSS819 (Run-Dates: 12/16/89, 6/16/90/ 12/15/90, 6/15/91)
ASSIST Reports NTDSS809A (Run-Dates: 12/15/89, 8/10/90/ 3/04/91, 7/20/91).

TABLE 2. Location of Clients in the Caseload, Department of Social Services, June, 1990 and June, 1991.

LOCATION	June, 1990			June, 1991		
CHILDREN UNDER 18						
Children in Placement:						
Foster Care	8,937	(81%)		10,092	(81%)	
Community Residence	1,382	(13%)		1,548	(13%)	
Other (*)	679	(6%)		752	(6%)	
Subtotal:	10,998	(100%)	(24%)	12,392	(100%)	(26%)
Children not in Placement:	35,405		(76%)	35,530		(74%)
TOTAL UNDER 18 IN CASELOAD:	46,403	(98%)	(100%)	47,922	(98%)	(100%)
18+ YEARS OLD IN PLACEMENT	854	(2%)		874	(2%)	
TOTAL IN CASELOAD:	47,257	(100%)		48,796	(100%)	

(*) "Other" includes children in pre-adoptive homes, supervised independent living, emergency shelters, institutions, and "on the run" from placement.

Source: ASSIST Reports NTDSS809A (Run-Dates: 8/10/90 and 7/20/91). ASSIST counts of children residing at home include some children in the custody of DSS.

TABLE 3. Age of Individuals in Placement, Department of Social Services, June, 1990 and June, 1991 (*)

AGE (years)	June, 1990		June, 1991		Change 6/90 - 6/91
0 - 5	3,115	(26%)	3,581	(26%)	(15%)
>5 - 12	3,646	(31%)	4,066	(31%)	(12%)
>12 - 18	4,237	(36%)	4,745	(36%)	(12%)
>18 - 22	771	(7%)	794	(6%)	(3%)
> 22	83	(1%)	80	(1%)	(-4%)
TOTAL	11,852	(100%)	13,266	(100%)	(12%)

(*) Placement locations are foster care, community residence, pre-adoptive home, supervised independent living, emergency shelter, institution, and "on the run" from placement.

Note: Total percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding-off.

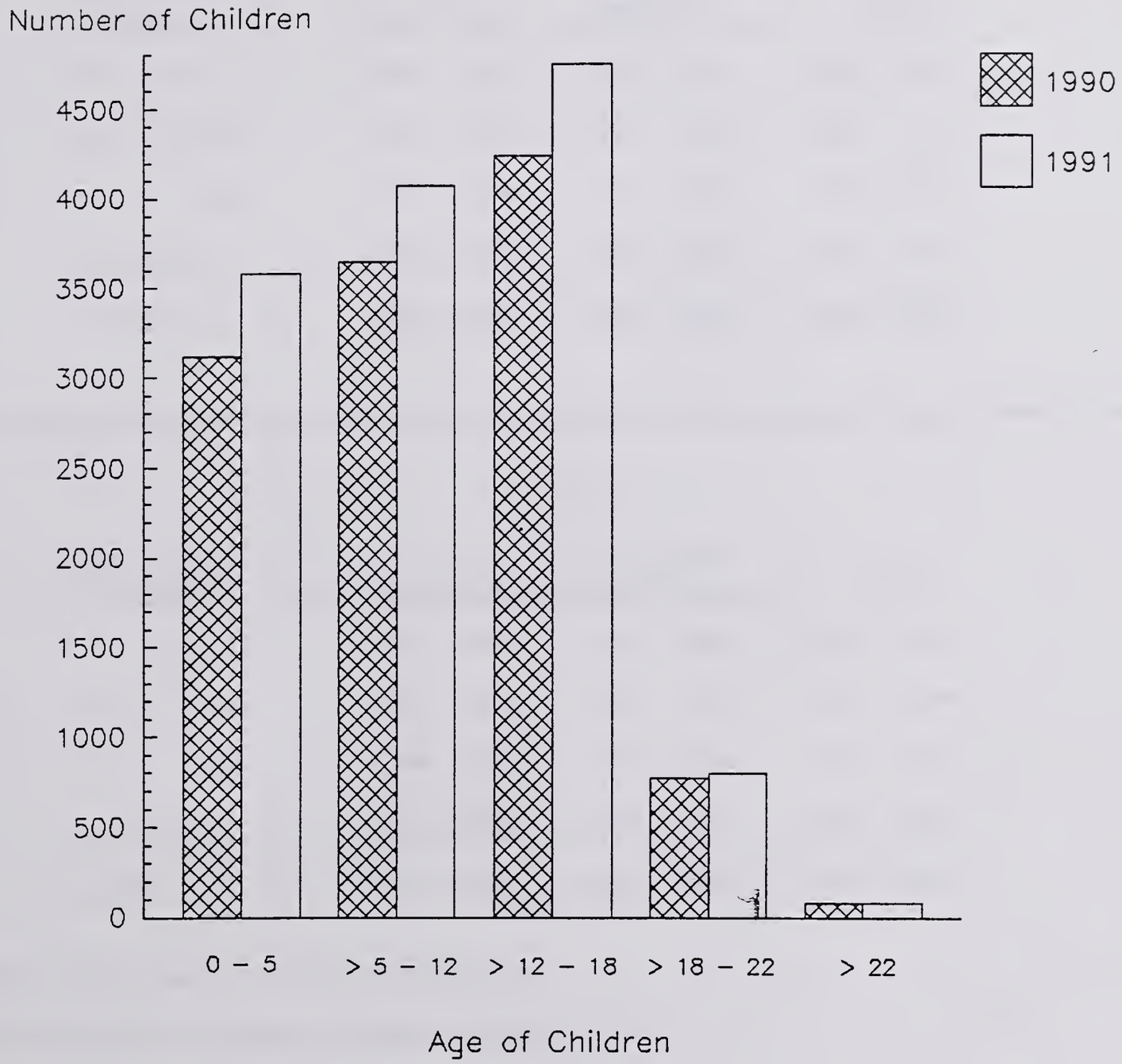
Source: ASSIST Report NTDSS809A (Run-Dates: 8/10/90 and 7/20/91).

TABLE 4. Age of individuals in Foster Care and Community Residence, Department of Social Services, June, 1990 and June, 1991.

Age (years)	June, 1990			June, 1990		
	Foster Care	Community Residence	Total	Foster Care	Community Residence	Total
0 - 5	2,969	5	2,974	3,432	2	3,434
>5 - 12	3,292	234	3,526	3,654	265	3,919
>12 - 18	2,676	1,143	3,819	3,006	1,281	4,287
>18	423	246	669	421	230	651
Total	9,360	1,628	10,988	10,513	1,778	12,291

Source: ASSIST Report NTDSS809A (Run-Dates: 8/10/90 and 7/20/91).

FIGURE 1. AGE OF INDIVIDUALS IN PLACEMENT JUNE, 1990 AND JUNE, 1991



Research, Evaluation and Planning Unit
Massachusetts Department of Social Services
Source: ASSIST Report NTDSS809A

TABLE 5. Length of Time of All Individuals in Foster Care and Community Residence, Department of Social Services, June, 1990 and June, 1991.

June, 1990

Length of Time in Placement	Foster Care		Community Residence		Total	
0 - 12 months	4,309	46%	606	37%	4,915	45%
> 12 - 18 months	1,336	14%	231	14%	1,567	14%
> 18 - 24 months	905	10%	161	10%	1,066	10%
> 24 months	2,810	30%	630	39%	3,440	31%
TOTAL	9,360	100%	1,628	100%	10,988	100%

June, 1991

Length of Time in Placement	Foster Care		Community Residence		Total	
0 - 12 months	4,481	43%	679	38%	5,160	42%
> 12 - 18 months	1,417	13%	241	14%	1,658	13%
> 18 - 24 months	1,189	11%	187	11%	1,376	11%
> 24 months	3,426	33%	671	38%	4,097	33%
TOTAL	10,513	100%	1,778	100%	12,291	100%

NOTE: These tables include individuals over 18 years old.

Source: ASSIST Report NTDSS495A (Run-Dates: 8/10/90 and 7/21/91).

TABLE 6. Changes in the Numbers of Individuals in Foster Care and Community Residence and Those Receiving an Adoption Subsidy, Department of Social Services, June, 1990 and June, 1991.

	June, 1990	June, 1991	Change 6/90 - 6/91
Foster Care	9,360	10,513	(+12%)
Community Residence	1,628	1,778	(+9%)
TOTAL IN PLACEMENT	10,988	12,291	(+12%)
SUBSIDIZED ADOPTIONS	3,358	3,705	(+10%)

Source: ASSIST Reports NTDSS809A (Run-Dates: 8/10/90 and 7/12/91)
ASSIST Subsidy Extract Disk File (Run-Date 6/29/90 and 6/28/91).

TABLE 7A. Counts of Maltreated Children (*)

No. of Children	1990	1991 (est)
Reported	82,831	89,555
Investigated and a Supported Finding of Maltreatment	28,621	30,930

(*) Calendar Years 1990 and 1991

Note: 1991 figures are based on January - June, 1991 data, projected to 12 months.

Source: ASSIST Reports NTDSS742A, January - December 1990 and January - June 1991.

TABLE 7B. Children with Supported Investigations of All Maltreatment and Sexual Abuse during January 1 - December 31, 1990 by Geographic Location.

Geographic Location	Children with Supported Investigations					
	All Maltreatment No.	% Change 1989-90	Sexual Abuse No.	% Change 1989-90	Sexual Abuse as % of All Maltreatment	% Change 1989-90
Pittsfield	628		98		16%	
Greenfield/Northampton	691		97		14%	
Holyoke/Westfield	1,466		146		10%	
Springfield	1,577		133		8%	
Fitchburg	749		124		17%	
South Central/Blackstone Valley	1,078		170		16%	
Worcester	1,324		152		11%	
PAS Agencies (*)	119		13		11%	
WEST	7,632	19%	933	-3%	12%	-3%
Lowell	1,280		103		8%	
Lawrence	1,100		105		10%	
Haverhill/Cape Ann	1,040		83		8%	
Lynn	870		68		8%	
Eastern Middlesex	739		64		9%	
Framingham/Marlborough	844		85		10%	
Cambridge-Somerville/Arlington	971		78		8%	
Waltham	333		25		8%	
PAS Agencies (*)	588		95		16%	
NORTHEAST	7,765	31%	706	16%	9%	-1%
Quincy/Weymouth	737		77		10%	
Attleboro/Taunton	1,175		137		12%	
Brockton	1,420		146		10%	
Fall River	1,095		109		10%	
New Bedford	1,451		139		10%	
Cape & Islands/Plymouth	1,229		142		12%	
PAS Agencies (*)	22		5		23%	
SOUTHEAST	7,129	31%	755	-5%	11%	-4%
Morton Street	1,036		63		6%	
Dimock Street/Allston	1,351		60		4%	
Solomon Carter Fuller M.H.C.	1,150		64		6%	
Fields Corner	1,510		64		4%	
Harbor/Chelsea	1,214		96		8%	
PAS Agencies (*)	243		43		18%	
BOSTON/BROOKLINE	6,504	23%	390	15%	6%	0%
STATE	29,030	26%	2,784	3%	10%	-2%

(*) Counts for 1990 are appreciably lower than those for 1989. Investigations completed in 1989 were counted according to the DSS Area/PAS Agency providing services rather than the office conducting the investigation. This oversight has been corrected so that the investigation is credited to the appropriate office.

Research, Evaluation, & Planning Unit
Office for Professional Services
Massachusetts Department of Social Services
SOURCE: ASSIST Extract Tapes (Run-Date: January 23, 1991).

TABLE 8. CASELOAD GROWTH - FY90 to FY91

INDICATOR	Total FY90	Total FY91	2 Year Total	Change FY90-FY91
# Emergency Reports Investigated	1,791	2,103	3,894	+17%
Investigated in 1 day	1,649	1,964	3,613	+19%
# Non-Emergency Reports Investigated	31,610	35,072	66,682	+11%
Investigated in 10 days	29,407	32,828	62,235	+12%

From January - June, 1990 To January - June, 1991

CHILDREN WITH SUPPORTED INVESTIGATIONS:	Jan-June 1990	Jan-June 1991	% Annual Change
Open for services	9,264	9,549	+3%
Percent open for services	65%	62%	-3%
Continue services	3,659	4,480	+22%
No services required	1,159	1,297	+12%
Unable to locate family	54	35	-35%
Refer for voluntary	38	20	-47%
All children supported	14,174	15,381	+9%
Percent receiving services	91%	91%	0%

	%Change FY89-FY90	%Change FY90-FY91	Current Level FY91	%Change FY89-FY91
CONSUMERS - TOTAL	+14%	+2%	81,975	+17%
Not in Placement	+14%	+1%	68,709	+15%
In Placement	+15%	+12%	13,266	+29%
with Relative	+32%	+23%	2,751	+62%
Unrelated Foster Care	+15%	+9%	7,762	+26%
Adoptive Home	+25%	+13%	285	+41%
Independent Living	+36%	+24%	245	+69%
Community Residence	-2%	+9%	1,778	+7%
Institution	+26%	-9%	102	+15%
Emergency Shelter	+9%	+9%	97	+18%
Other	-7%	+17%	246	+8%
CONSUMERS IN PLACEMENT	+15%	+12%	13,266	+29%
0 - 2 years old	+21%	+15%	1,315	+39%
> 2 - 5 years old	+31%	+15%	2,266	+51%
> 5 - 12 years old	+16%	+12%	4,066	+29%
> 12 - 18 years old	+7%	+12%	4,745	+20%
> 18 years old	+15%	+2%	874	+18%

Source: ASSIST Report NTDSS742A (July - June, 1990 and July - June, 1991)
ASSIST Report NTDSS809A (Run-Dates 8/10/90 and 7/20/91)
ASSIST Extract Tapes (Run-Dates 7/15/90 and 7/23/91.